

**REMARKS**

The above amendment and these remarks are responsive to the Office Action of Examiner James A. Kramer, dated 8 May 2006.

Claims 1-7 and 9-17 are in the case, none as yet allowed.

**35 U.S.C. 103**

Claims 1-7 and 9-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Barnes et al. (U.S. Patent 5,970,475, hereinafter, Barnes) Maners in view of Cukor et al. (U.S. Patent 5,168,444, hereinafter, Cukor).

Applicants invention relates to a method and system for invoice authorization by the original requester (that is,

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individual employee) with invoices presented to the requester in a particularly useful and user friendly manner whether such invoices are received hard copy or by EDI. These concepts are explained in applicants' specification, for example, at page 16, line 20 to page 19, line 10.

Further, applicants invention relates to the process of enabling individuals who ordered the original goods or services for their own use to ensure that payment is made, or not made, based on their being able to view the original invoice images, and supports both EDI and manual processing.

In Response to Arguments, the Examiner suggests the use of separate steps for processing paper and electronic invoices and separate steps for positive and negative confirmation capabilities. Applicants appreciate the suggestion, and have amended the claims accordingly.

Further in Response to Arguments, the Examiner refers to Barnes, asserting that Barnes teaches that an original user confirms the vendor invoice. Applicants traverse on this point.

The Examiner states [Office Action, page 3] the

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following:

"Barnes further teaches a confirmation request to the purchaser (individual employee creating the original order) (see for example column 8, lines 55-56). Examiner further notes that the confirmation by the user can be either negative confirmation or positive confirmation (see for example column 23, lines 28-43)."

Applicants agree that Barnes teaches that the goods or services ordered by an individual user are supplied to the user (see Barnes, Col. 8, lines 52-53), and that the user, after shipment has been made to the user, can select how to pay the invoice. (Barnes, Col. 8, lines 55-56).

However, applicants argue, Barnes does not teach that a confirmation request is sent to the user which may be either a negative or a positive confirmation request. The Examiner refers to Barnes at column 23, lines 28-43 for that teaching. However, this is what Barnes teaches:

"Numerous accounting options (138a) (FIG. 20) are available to an administrator by electing the "Accounting Setup" module 138 in FIG. 13. These

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include setting up and maintain[ing] bank accounts 138b (FIG. 21), as well as setting up and maintaining supplier payments 138c (FIG. 22). Thus, for example, the administrator can, here, select the mode of payment for goods/services ordered, i.e., purchasing card or ACH payment. Other pre-arranged options can, clearly, also be included."

"The payment module procedure 141 flowchart is shown in FIG. 23, and becomes accessible by electing the "Payment" option in FIG. 13. In the example, the payments can be entered on the 'payment log' of the supplier. After the payment decision as been made encrypted payment instructions are sent to the ACH gateway 50. After confirmation of payment has been received from the gateway 50 the transaction is posted to the buyer's legacy system 46." [Barnes, Col. 23, lines 28-43, emphasis and correction added.]

It is clear that in the above quoted material from Barnes, Barnes is teaching that the supplier, not the end-user, is confirming that payment has been received, not that end users are providing confirmation of receipt of goods or services for some invoice instances by negative confirmation

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and for other invoice instances by positive confirmation.

With respect to Cukor, applicants argue that Cukor does not teach both negative and positive confirmation processing by an individual employee who is both the originator of an invoice for and the end user of a purchased commodity or service, as distinguished from accounts payable personnel, or other personnel who are not the end user of the purchase commodity or service. Neither does Barnes, a conclusion previously argued.

Thus, applicants note that none of the references cited specify that an employee who is the end user of a commodity or service, as distinguished from accounts payable or other personnel, is the one who originates the requisition and confirms the vendor invoice using a process which supports both positive and negative confirmation.

Applicants whole process is structured to enable end-users who request a service or commodity to provide confirmation according to a specified approval process: either positive or negative confirmation. To enable end users to function in such a capacity, not being A/P or purchasing personnel and trained in the use of electronic or

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paper work flow executed by such personnel, applicants have provided a specific work flow that is designed for their use, and includes the steps set forth in the claims, as amended.

Applicants request that the rejection of claims 1-7 and 9-17 under 35 U.S.C. 103 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

#### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Applicants urge that the above amendments be entered and the case passed to issue with claims 1-7, and 9-17.

The Application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action by the Examiner is urged. Should differences remain, however, which do not place one/more of the remaining claims in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned at the number provided below for the purpose of providing constructive assistance and suggestions in order that allowable claims can be presented, thereby placing the Application in

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condition for allowance without further proceedings being necessary.

Sincerely,

T. A. Aber, et al.

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